



*Established 1906*

February 17, 2023

Opposed to HB6615

Honorable Members of the General Law Committee.

My name is Jim Gartland. I have been involved with the sport of greyhound racing for 45 years. Currently, I am the Executive Director of the National Greyhound Association (NGA), headquartered in Abilene, Kansas, and have served in that capacity for the past six years. Abilene, KS is known as the "Greyhound Capitol of the World" and is also home to the Greyhound Hall of Fame.

Despite what you may have been told, the greyhound racing is not a dying sport. The industry is actually seeing a huge uptick in betting as evidenced by recent wagering figures out of West Virginia where the two tracks there showed a 187% increase in wagering in 2021 as compared to the last full year of racing in 2019. 187%! In fact, while soundly defeating similar legislation two years ago, West Virginia lawmakers not only saw past the animal rights agenda, but in debate, encouraged support and expansion of greyhound racing based on the potential for growth they saw, and now that state is reaping those benefits. Other States like Kansas and Alabama are looking to bring racing back to boost economies and agriculture businesses in their states as well.

Greyhound racing and greyhound farms have been a part of the fabric of the American agriculture community for many, many years and it would be shame to have another part of that taken away due to the baseless concerns of animal rights activists.

Last year, the Connecticut House of Representatives passed a ban on greyhound racing. During that debate it was stated that because greyhound racing has not been in operation in Connecticut, a ban on racing would put "absolutely no one out of business." That statement is patently false. Many, if not all, of our membership relies on income from monies wagered throughout the country, including out of Connecticut. Taking away the ability to wager on greyhounds in Connecticut will directly affect jobs and income for thousands of greyhound owners and breeders around the country, including those from Connecticut.

I am sure you have, and will further, hear all of the lies from the anti-racing, anti-gambling animal rights activists. Nearly all of their rhetoric is false. Racing greyhounds

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are treated better than most pets in America. The individuals involved in this industry make their living from these great athletes. Why would they mistreat them? It makes no sense. I have included in this correspondence some literature debunking the claims of Grey2K and their ilk. I implore you to take a look at the materials to learn the truth about our industry.

The NGA along with its partner, the American Greyhound Council, as well as hundreds of adoption agencies and thousands of dedicated volunteers have accomplished a near 100% adoption rate for retired racing greyhounds. In fact, greyhounds are quickly becoming one of the most sought after breeds for pets in America to the point there has become a near "shortage" of available greyhound pets. These majestic animals make great pets due to the way they are raised, handled, socialized and trained as racers. You will not find a more readymade pet than a retired greyhound.

I strongly urge you to vote against HB6615, see through the hidden agenda of the animal rights activists and research the truth about greyhound racing.

Respectfully,



Jim Gartland  
Executive Director